



# Supporting the Whole Child



*School Support Staff:  
A Vital Piece In Student Success*



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# Youth Mental Health Statistics

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FACT: 1 in 5 youth ages 13 - 18 have, or will have a serious mental illness or mental health disorder.

A mental health disorder or mental illness is a diagnosable illness that:

- Affects a person's thinking, emotional state and behavior
- Disrupts the person's ability to
  - Work or attend school
  - Carry out daily activities
  - Engage in satisfying relationships

## Impact



50%

50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24.<sup>1</sup>

10 yrs



The average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years.<sup>1</sup>

50%



Approximately 50% of students age 14 and older with a mental illness drop out of high school.<sup>1</sup>

70%



70% of youth in state and local juvenile justice systems have a mental illness.<sup>1</sup>

## Suicide



3rd

Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in youth ages 10 - 24.<sup>1</sup>



90%

90% of those who died by suicide had an underlying mental illness.<sup>1</sup>

# What does this mean?

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- In a classroom of 25 students, 5 of them may be struggling with the same issues many adults deal with: depression, anxiety, substance abuse.
- Nearly 80% who need mental health services won't get them.
- Related to major problems in schools: chronic absence, low achievement, disruptive behavior, and dropping out.



# Common Mental Health Disorders in Youth

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- ADD/ADHD/ODD
- Anxiety Disorders
- Bipolar Disorder
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Psychosis
- Substance Use Disorders

\*\*\* Students with a mental health disorder do not always need assistance and students who need assistance do not always have a mental health disorder\*\*\*

# Who is supporting our students?

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- School counselors
- School social workers
- School nurses
- School psychologist
- Behavior specialists

*Each have specific training and unique skill sets to meet student needs*

# School Counselor Responsibilities

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- Implement school wide programs
- Classroom lessons
- Small group counseling
- Individual student counseling
- Develop and monitor Section 504 Plans
- Provide MTSS support
- Meet with parents and families
- Collaborate with community agencies
- Address concerns of abuse and neglect
- Develop and monitor behavior plans
- Identify homeless students and families
- Serve on various school teams
- Consult with teachers and administration
- Assist with IEP meetings
- Assist with enrollment
- Prepare student record transfers
- Conduct student observations
- Coordinate student clubs
- Morning/lunch/afternoon duties
- Connect students and families with outside resources
- Communicate with outside service providers
- Serve on the crisis team
- Suicide and self harm assessments
- Assist with testing
- Class scheduling
- Schedule changes
- Career and college planning
- Conduct staff training

# School Social Worker Responsibilities

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- Meet with parents and families
- Connect families to outside resources - food, housing, clothing, medical care, etc.
- Monitor student attendance
- Create student attendance plans
- Participate in truancy court
- Go on home visits
- Identify homeless students and families
- Assist with transportation for displaced students
- Assist with IEP and 504 paperwork
- Address concerns of abuse or neglect
- Communicate with DSS and CPS
- Coordinate holiday assistance to families
- Train staff on child abuse and homelessness
- Facilitate small group counseling
- Provide crisis intervention



# School Nurse Responsibilities

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- Identify students with special health needs
- Perform health screenings and assessments
- Develop Individual Health Plans
- Work with students with chronic conditions
- Provide emergency care for illness and injury of students and staff
- Conduct staff training in special procedures for medication administration
- Monitor and develop school health policies and procedures
- Communicates with outside health care providers
- Provides health resources to families
- Address concerns of abuse and neglect
- Assist with IEP and 504 plans
- Monitor immunization records
- Assist with student registration
- Conduct CPR and First Aid classes
- Participate in school safety committees

# School Psychologist Responsibilities

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- Conduct comprehensive, culturally-sensitive psycho-educational assessments
- Score, interpret, analyze, and report results of assessments in written reports
- Provide recommendations for students
- Interpret results and recommendations for parents and team
- Assist with FBA/BIP development
- Consult with teachers and administrators
- Interpret reports from outside agencies and other school districts
- Attend MDR meetings as needed
- Attend referral, re-evaluation, annual, and eligibility meetings when needed
- Conduct student observations
- Provide support to case managers
- Ensure compliance of testing timelines

# Student to Staff Ratios

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## Harnett County:

- Counselor - 366:1
- Social Worker - 2,280:1
- Nurse - 2,052:1
- Psychologist - 2,931:1
- Behavior Specialist - 2 for the county

## National Recommendation:

- Counselor - 250:1
- Social Worker - 400:1
- Nurse - 750:1 (\*225:1)
- Psychologist - 500-700:1
- Behavior Specialist - N/A

# Who is providing mental health services?

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- Students referred to outside agencies
- Mobile Crisis Unit
- Local hospital emergency room
- Barriers:
  - Providers limited
  - Transportation and financial barriers
  - Stigma associated with mental illness
  - Lack of convenient appointment times
  - Parent follow through
  - Language

# Survey Results

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- September 2018
- Harnett County School Administrators
- 92% felt their school would benefit from an additional school counselor
- 100% felt they would benefit from a school social worker being at their school more often
- More than half felt their school needed a school nurse at their site each day
- Mental health concerns and behavior issues were seen as some of the biggest issues students face
- National survey of school administrators showed student mental health issues as their number one concern

# How can we meet student's social-emotional needs?

Additional support staff

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Reduced student to staff ratio

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Ability to devote more time to working directly with students

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School support staff play a vital role in ensuring students are learning in a safe and supportive environment. They foster positive, trusting relationships with students and improve school climate by encouraging parent and family involvement. They provide support to students who are experiencing academic, behavioral, or emotional difficulties and remove barriers to education.



# Questions?